

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 6, and 15 are pending in the present application. By this amendment, claims 1, 6, and 15 are amended. Claims 2, 4-5, 7 and 9-14 are canceled. Accordingly, the rejections of claims 2, 4-5, 7 and 9-14 are now moot. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present claims in view of the following remarks.

Entry of the above amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 (a) in that the above Amendment (1) places the claims in condition for allowance; (2) places the claims in better condition for consideration on appeal, if necessary; (3) does not raise any new issues; and (4) does not add new claims without canceling a corresponding number of claims. For the reasons given above, entry of the above amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 is respectfully requested.

Summary of Telephone Interview

On June 30, 2004, Mike Baldauff and Leonard Hope spoke to Examiner Vaughn regarding the above claim amendments. Examiner Vaughn indicated that these amendments would render the claims allowable over the prior art of record.

Independent Claim 1

The applicants have amended independent claim one to incorporate the allowable recitations of independent claim 15. Accordingly, independent claim 1, as amended, is allowable over the prior art of record.

Dependent Claim 3

For at least the reason that claim 3 depends from allowable independent claim 1, dependent claim 3 is allowable over the prior art of record.

Dependent Claim 6

The applicants have amended claim 6 to depend from allowed claim 15. For at least this reason, dependent claim 6 is allowable over the prior art of record.

Allowed Claim 15

In the May 26, 2004 Office Action, the Examiner indicated that independent claim 15 is allowed. The applicants have amended claim 15 to correct a typographical error that resulted from rewriting original claim 8 to incorporate the recitations of claims 4 and 5. The applicants submit that no new matter was added.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, the applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and reexamination of the application and allowance of the claims at an early date is solicited. If the Examiner has any questions or comments concerning this matter, the Examiner is invited to contact the applicant's undersigned attorney at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,
MERCHANT & GOULD



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